Page For Kids

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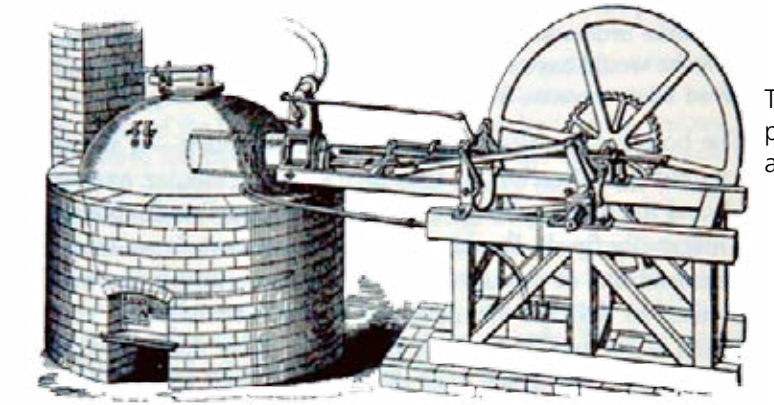
The wonderful world of STEAM

Fill a tea kettle with water, place it on a hot stove, and after a few minutes, what do you hear?

If you guessed whistle, or made the sound “eeeeee!” you would be right!

What’s going on here? Well, the water in the kettle boils and creates steam (AKA the gaseous state of water), which then pushes up the little cover over the spout and causes that whistling sound. The ability of steam to power machines was one of the most important seeds that started the Industrial Revolution over 300 years ago and changed civilization.

Imagine that the spout cover on your tea kettle is instead a rod. Imagine that when your water boils, the steam that rises pushes on that rod and makes it move up. This is how you can begin to understand how steam can make a machine move.

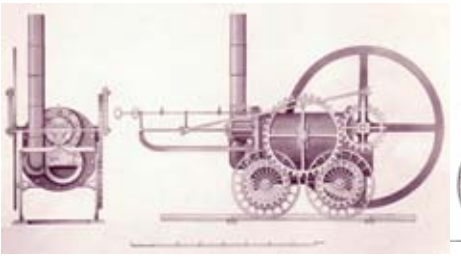


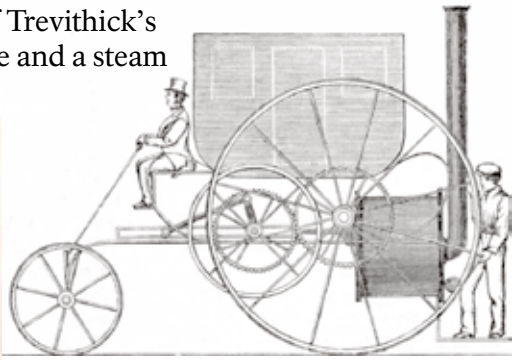
Trevithick’s high-pressure engine and boiler, 1803.

Here is an illustration showing a steam engine designed by Richard Trevithick, who was a successful British inventor and engineer.

The round brick structure on the left is where water was heated and boiled, probably by a coal or wood fire. The dome on the top is where steam collected. As the steam built up, it got pushed to the right, where it drove the parts of the machine.

Here are two more pictures of Trevithick’s inventions, a steam locomotive and a steam carriage.





Steam power was really important for maritime uses! Look around Hyde Street Pier and find the three ships that used steam power. What were they used for? Which ship is the biggest and how did it move?

Steam is also very useful in our daily lives. Unscramble these words to find out how!

OKOC _____ your vegetables!
ANLEC _____ your carpets!
ROIN _____ your clothes!
Relax with a steam ATBH _____ !
Come by the shipwright shop, you might see someone GENNDBI _____ wood!

P	M	S	E	L	U	C	R	E	H	E	R	E	T	R
I	I	A	W	B	C	T	H	I	R	C	N	A	W	E
U	N	S	E	F	A	A	I	I	M	G	U	K	N	B
P	G	D	T	T	I	O	F	A	I	Y	S	I	Y	O
J	R	F	U	O	S	B	R	N	U	J	H	T	P	I
C	K	V	J	S	N	I	E	M	I	C	X	E	X	L
E	P	P	L	E	T	O	N	H	A	L	L	C	R	E
O	A	I	W	I	R	R	J	M	U	U	C	H	E	R
I	M	F	M	O	I	U	I	F	N	I	M	N	L	O
Y	P	E	I	J	O	X	S	A	C	Z	H	O	T	Z
Q	G	U	R	G	M	D	A	S	L	F	W	L	S	G
R	E	T	A	W	J	O	E	P	E	S	P	O	I	A
E	U	R	E	K	A	C	O	A	L	R	K	G	H	O
T	T	Y	Y	R	X	Z	V	J	D	R	P	Y	W	Q
H	N	E	D	Z	A	D	M	X	Z	O	M	E	I	C

Try the STEAMY word search

BOAT
ENGINE
FIRE
MACHINE
PRESSURE
WATER
BOILER
EPPLETONHALL
HERCULES
MARITIME
STEAM
WHISTLE
COAL
EUREKA
INDUSTRIAL
PISTON
TECHNOLOGY
WOOD